Re: Improving A	Access to	Contrace	ptives in	St.	Louis	County

WHEREAS, St. Louis County, through its Department of Public Health ("DPH") is
continually committed to improving all aspects of public health services, including contraceptive
services and programs for the people of the County, with a focus on providing equitable access
to services and resources to address health and racial disparities; and,
WHEREAS, DPH currently promotes reproductive and sexual health through multiple
initiatives for people and DPH patients of all gender expressions and sexual orientations; and,
WHEREAS, at three County community health centers, the County Jail, and the
Juvenile Detention Facility, DPH provides clinical services, including care related to pregnancy
and childbirth, family planning counseling and options, sexual health, well woman exams,
predominantly female cancers, mammography, and menopause; and,
WHEREAS, approximately 1,500 patients receive these services and care annually,
77% are Black/African American, the majority live in high poverty neighborhoods, and about
50% of patients have Medicaid/Medicaid managed care, 17% have Gateway to Better Health,
and 12% are uninsured; and,
WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has identified reducing
the national rate of unintended pregnancy as a critical step to improving health; and,
WHEREAS, unintended pregnancies are defined as those reported to have been either
mis-timed i.e., occurring earlier than desired or unwanted i.e., occurring when no children, or
no more children, were desired; and,

WHEREAS, unintended childbearing is associated with a number of adverse maternal and child health outcomes, including inadequate or delayed initiation of prenatal care, smoking

- and drinking during pregnancy, premature birth, poor breastfeeding initiation and duration rates,
- 2 and higher rates of child neglect and maltreatment; and,

and,

- WHEREAS, each year, half of all pregnancies in Missouri are unintended; and,
- WHEREAS, a total of 2,337 babies were born to St. Louis County teens 15 to 19 years of age between 2014 and 2018 with disparities existing between teens in neighborhoods with very high poverty rates when compared to their peers in more low poverty rate neighborhoods;
 - **WHEREAS**, people most in need of contraceptive services are uninsured or underinsured, geographically isolated, low-income, teens, and/or people of color; and,
 - **WHEREAS,** DPH currently receives Title X funding from the Missouri Family Health Council and uses those dollars to support many of these clinical services; and,
 - WHEREAS, there are many forms of contraceptives that can safely and effectively prevent unintended pregnancy, such as intrauterine contraception, hormonal methods, barrier methods, emergency contraception, and permanent methods of birth control; and
 - WHEREAS, high upfront costs, a lack of adequate training for health care professionals, administrative barriers, and insufficient information and education have made contraceptives difficult to access; and
 - **WHEREAS**, it is the intent of DPH to update policies and procedures to expand access to proper care, support, and treatment for patients seeking contraceptives and family planning services and work alongside the existing St. Louis community of reproductive and sexual health advocates and organizations; and,
 - WHEREAS, it is the intent of DPH to provide more gender inclusive patient care, including staff training, and DPH acknowledges that its clinical services must also be provided

1	to transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming patients;
2	NOW, THEREFORE, I, Sam Page, County Executive, St. Louis County, Missouri,
3	do hereby DECLARE and ORDER the following:
4	1. There shall continue to be a program administered by DPH to improve information
5	and access to quality contraceptive services; this program shall include expanded
6	training for DPH clinic staff related to patient-centered counseling, racial-bias
7	training, billing and coding, administrative support, and comprehensive
8	contraceptive clinical training.
9	2. DPH shall strengthen the partnership with Missouri Family Health Council (MFHC)
10	and explore additional partnership and funding opportunities to expand access and
11	strengthen the provision of quality contraceptive services to include:
12	a. Expansion of contraception counseling and services at all DPH health
13	centers, including Corrections Medicine and expansion of contraceptive
14	counseling and education through telehealth platforms.
15	b. Implementation of racial bias assessments and an internal equity audit to
16	strengthen and expand training for DPH staff on patient-centered counseling
17	and anti-bias and anti-racism training;
18	c. Integration of pregnancy intention screenings throughout DPH programs,
19	including WIC and Nurse Family Partnership;
20	d. Promotion of the availability of reproductive health services at DPH;
21	e. Other services and programs DPH deems necessary to improve access to
22	contraceptives.
23	SO ORDERED this 7th_day of March, 2022.

1	ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MISSOURI
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3	
4	
5	Sam Page